

VISIT...

LANZAROTE
Caliente.COM

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN

Vocabulary Readers

Fly Away, Children



by Lee S. Justice

Number of Words: 548

ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

4 Mapping Specialists.

PHOTOGRAPHY CREDITS

Cover, 1, 3 Courtesy of Elly Vilano Chovel, Chairperson, Operation Pedro Pan Group, Inc. **5** Courtesy of William N. Trumbull. **7 (bl)** Courtesy of the Cuban Heritage Collection, University of Miami Libraries, Coral Gables, Florida. **(br)** **(tr)** Courtesy of Elly Vilano Chovel, Chairperson, Operation Pedro Pan Group, Inc. **8, 9, 10, 11** Courtesy of Elly Vilano Chovel, Chairperson, Operation Pedro Pan Group, Inc.

Copyright © 2006 by Houghton Mifflin Company. All right reserved.

No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying or recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system without the prior written permission of Houghton Mifflin Company unless such copying is expressly permitted by federal copyright law. Address inquiries to School Permissions, Houghton Mifflin Company, 222 Berkeley Street, Boston, MA 02116.

Printed in the U.S.A.

ISBN: 0-618-64963-8

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 B 14 13 12 11 10 09 08 07 06 05

Fly Away, Children



by Lee S. Justice



Strategy Focus

As you read, **evaluate** how well the author explains the story of these refugee children.



HOUGHTON MIFFLIN

BOSTON

Key Vocabulary

decision choice or judgment

diplomat someone who handles talks
between nations

government organization that manages
a nation

permission approval to do something

refugees people who leave their country
to escape harm

superiors bosses; those with more power

visas documents allowing travel to
another country

Word Teaser

People who want to see new vistas
might need a _____.

Suppose you had to leave your family and friends and move to another country. Here is a true story about some young people who had to do just that. They had to leave their homeland behind. They didn't know when they would see their families again.



The year was 1960. The country was Cuba. Cuba had a new leader, Fidel Castro. Castro's **government** was very strict. It took control of schools, jobs, and even religion. Cuban people wanted free elections. But Castro did not give the people **permission** to choose their rulers.



Castro also made it hard for Cubans to leave the country. But thousands of Cubans wanted to leave anyway. They hoped to move to the United States. They went to the U.S. Embassy in Cuba and spoke with people called **diplomats**. The diplomats represented the United States government. They helped Cubans apply for documents called **visas**. Visas would allow them to enter the United States.

**U.S. visa building
in Cuba today**



Many of the **refugees** who left Cuba were children. Some of the children left with their families. But many of them came alone. Their families only had money for one ticket. Like most refugees from Cuba, the children came to Miami, Florida. They arrived with no place to live. They had no one to care for them.

Something had to be done. A priest in Miami wanted to help. He talked to people in the U.S. government. They spoke with their bosses and **superiors** in Washington, D.C. These officials agreed to aid Cuba's refugee children.

Some Cubans wanted to help also. They found a way to fly more children out of Cuba. They found families in the United States who would take care of the children once they were on American soil. The plan was called Operation Pedro Pan. It was named for Peter Pan, from the book about a boy who could fly.

Polita Grau (photo on left) was one of the Cuban helpers in Operation Pedro Pan. Father Bryan O. Walsh (photo on right) was the Catholic priest who helped start Operation Pedro Pan.



**OPERATION
PEDRO PAN GROUP, INC.**



Many Cuban parents were glad to hear about Operation Pedro Pan. They were afraid Castro might send their children away to government camps and schools. Teenagers might be forced to serve in Castro's army.

But the parents had a very hard **decision** to make. Should they send their children to the United States alone? Or should their children stay in Cuba and face unknown dangers?

Many Cubans decided to send their children to the United States. They hoped that Castro's government would soon end. Then their children could return to Cuba. With sad hearts, parents brought their children to the airport. Many parents were not able to say good-bye.





Operation Pedro Pan lasted from December 1960 until October 1962. Airplanes brought more than 14,000 children from Havana, Cuba, to Miami, Florida. In the United States, relatives or foster families took care of the children. Some children went to live in group homes and orphanages. Pedro Pan children went to live in 35 different states.

Hundreds of boys stayed in a refugee camp south of Miami.



Life was hard for many of these children. They did not speak English. They missed their families and friends. Many Pedro Pan children waited for years to see their families again.

Today, the Pedro Pan children have grown up. Most of them still live in the United States. Many have good jobs and happy lives. Still, they think of Cuba. They hope for the day when their homeland will be truly free.

Many Operation Pedro Pan children have grown up to be community and government leaders in the U.S.



Responding

Putting Words to Work

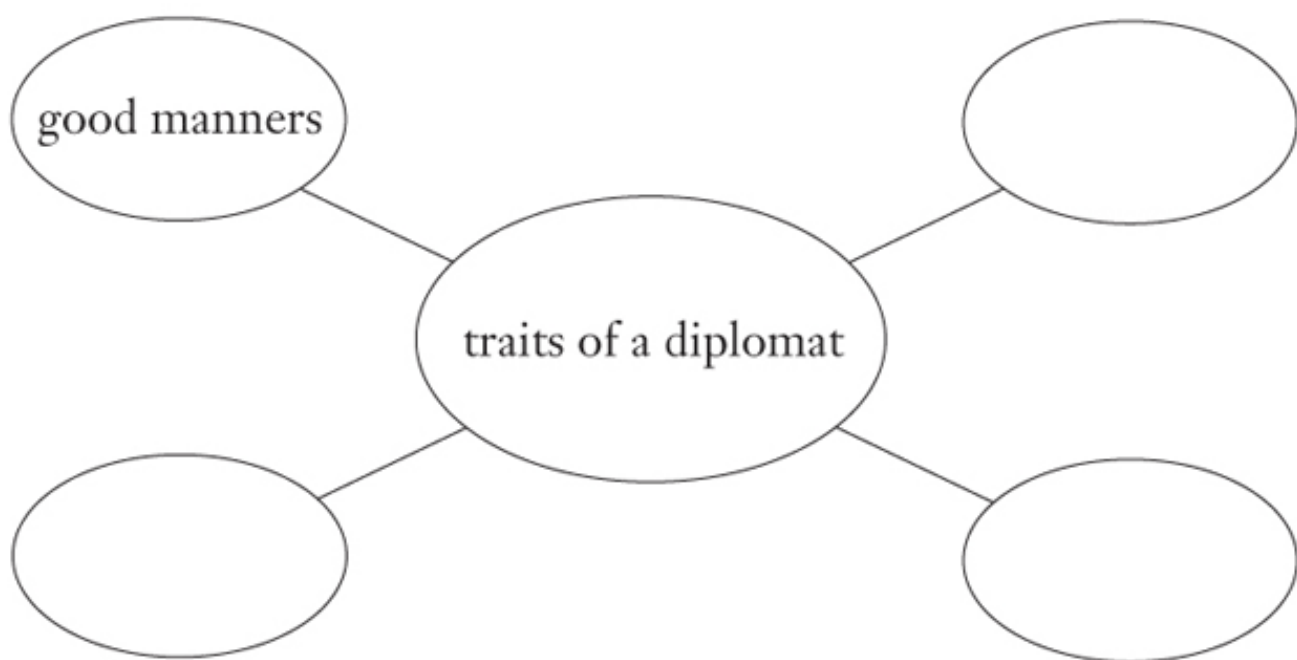
1. Why was the **decision** to take part in Operation Pedro Plan a hard one for families to make?
2. What are some things that the United States **government** does for the people?
3. What are two problems that **refugees** might face?
4. Someone might apply for a **visa** if _____.
5. **PARTNER ACTIVITY:** Think of a word you learned in the text. Explain its meaning to your partner and give an example.

Answer to Word Teaser

visa

Word Builder

A **diplomat** is someone who works for the government. Diplomats handle talks between nations that are trying to reach an agreement. The word *diplomat* also describes someone who can handle situations without upsetting anyone. Copy the web below. Complete it with traits that a diplomat might need.



Write About It

Write a paragraph about why it's important to be a diplomat. You can write about diplomats who work in the government or diplomats in daily life. Use some of the words from your Word Builder web.

Key Vocabulary

decision
diplomat
government
permission
refugees
superiors
visas

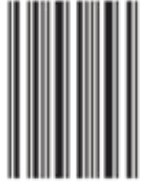
6.1.2

ISBN 0-618-64963-8



9 780618 649631

9 0000



HOUGHTON MIFFLIN

1-31242